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THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET
CHRONICLE

Week of February 27, 2012 Vol. 31, Issue 29

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PUC donates 165 units of blood

Melissa Pilipow
Chronicle Correspondent

A plethora of students and community members donned "I make a difference" stickers after donating blood at the Red Cross blood drive, held in the SUL building on Feb. 15 and 16. Sponsored by the PUC Wellness Center, the blood drive collected a total of 165 units of blood from donors.

The Red Cross's donation goal was set at 90 units on Wednesday and 85 units on Thursday, slightly greater than what was collected. Last semester, the final count totaled 209 units, exceeding the organization's goal of 185 units.

According to the American Red Cross, each unit of blood can benefit up to three people. Information released from the organization reports that the donated blood will go toward helping as many as 495 individuals.

Martha Lowry, the wellness coordinator in the Wellness Center, said that the results make the work involved in the event worthwhile.

"The generosity of our campus community can only be admired," Lowry said.

As an incentive to give blood, each donor was entered into a daily Visa gift card drawing held by the Red Cross. Additionally, they provided each participant with a free t-shirt. However, many individuals were compelled to donate in order to give back.

Laurie Krumm, a junior majoring in elementary education, said that she donates blood for her mom, Margaret, who has multiple sclerosis. Krumm shared that her mom used to donate often, but is no longer able to due to her long list of medications.

Although she has given blood over 10 times and has hit the gallon mark, Krumm admits that she still dreads the recovery period of the process. During this phase, some donors feel dizzy, lightheaded or nauseous. Even though she fainted after donating blood once, Krumm said that it is still worth it.

Others, such as sophomore April Kosarko detest the feeling of the needle during the actual donation. However, the pain, which she describes as only temporary, does not keep Kosarko from returning. She donated throughout high school and has attended every blood drive at PUC since her enrollment.

"I like giving blood, and if I need it sometime, I want to have given it," Krumm explained.

Overall, the Wellness Center and Red Cross express their gratitude and many thanks to all who donated. *breakout box with a blood pouch or something that looks cool but not too gross* To donate with Red Cross, visit redcross.org to view blood drive locations in the area or wait for the next scheduled event on campus.

Career Services puts students first

Andrea Drac
Staff Writer

Balancing school and work can be difficult, but PUC makes it easier by giving students an opportunity to work on campus.

Junior and communications major Alan McCafferty has been working in the PUC library since fall 2008.

"I saw another student behind the desk and asked for an application," McCafferty said. "I love my job at the library. The hours are good, the staff is great and I'm around books all day. [I] couldn't ask for more."

In addition to finding jobs around campus, PUC's Office of Career Services, located in SUL 349, helps students find jobs and assists with many aspects of the job process. Amy Wedding, career services coordinator, said Career Services helps students with everything from resume development and professional etiquette to salary negotiating and mock interviewing.

Wedding said that since July 1 of this year, they have been able to assist over 3,100 students.

"I would say more than 80% of our appointments come from resume and letter reviews, job search assistance, interviewing techniques and career advising," Wedding said.

Currently, Wedding said there are seven on-campus-jobs available for students, such as Clerical Assistant, Receptionist, Research Coordinator, Web Developer, Graduate Aide, Social Media Assistant and University Village Resident Assistant. Wedding said if a student is interested in applying for an on-campus position, they should first access their CareerTrax account.

CareerTrax is Career Services' online job database that includes opportunities for internships, on-campus student employment and on-campus professional workshops. Wedding said every student at PUC has a CareerTrax account, and it can be activated by going to www.pucjobs.com, clicking on "student," and then clicking on "forgot password," which will then send the student an activation email to their student email account. Students can also call or stop by Career Services to have their password reset.

"Once the student activates their CareerTrax account, they will upload a recent resume," Wedding said. "All jobs in CareerTrax are available for students to apply to by simply submitting a resume."

If a student does not have a resume, Wedding said Career

See Career page 4

Student hopes to hit New York Times bestseller list

Kevin Meece
Chronicle Correspondent

For many, the time spent at PUC is a preparatory period, an opportunity to build up the skills set that is necessary for an appropriate professional job. The calm before the storm of post-grad professional life.

Some students though are already making efforts to make a name for themselves in their aspiring professional careers. Megan Mann, an english-professional writing major, would fall into this category.

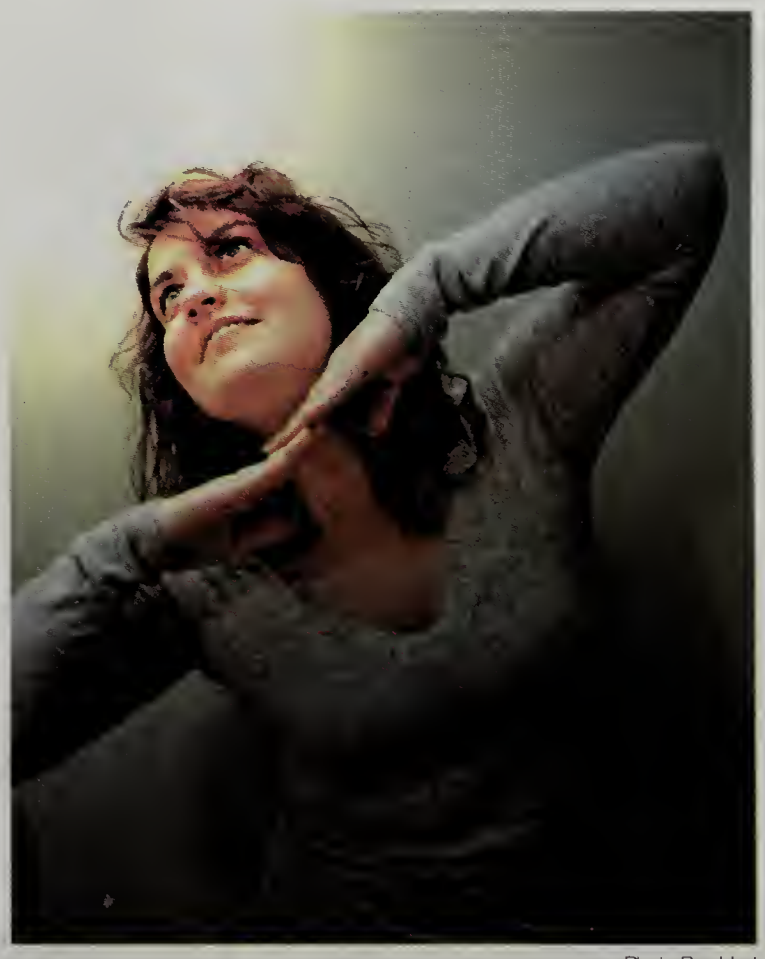

Photo Provided

Megan Mann, PUC English professional writing major and author of "Please Swipe Again."

As a junior, Mann already has one complete novel under her belt. Titled "Please Swipe Again," which tells the story of a college student Ava, who starts to feel the pressures of her upcoming adult life and all of its responsibilities. Recently dumped by her ex-boyfriend, Ava decides to clear her thoughts and stay with a friend in New York City. It is here that she meets and finds solace in a young man named Kiernan. The novel is a coming-of-age piece that is especially relevant to college students.

The fact that Mann is a full-time college student certainly influenced the internal struggles that her main character, Ava, faced.

"In my experience, I very rarely come across books specifically set in college. There are coming-of-age stories in high school and 'becoming a full-blown adult' stories in the mid-twenties or so, but I hardly found one with a college setting. I saw what my friends were going through; the confusion over what they wanted to do, the relationships that they weren't sure how to work," Mann said.

See Bestseller page 4

Jessie Martin
Student Body President

Hello PUC students! With only two weeks left until Spring Break, we are closing in on the halfway point of the Spring 2012 semester. As we are about to enter the month of March, there are a few things I want to bring to the attention of our student body.

One issue that remains unchanged and problematic on our campus at Purdue University Calumet is faculty and course evaluations. While students have always had a desire to improve the system we have on campus now, there are signs that more and more members of the faculty and administration are coming around to the idea that this system is very inadequate, and substantive changes are needed to the evaluations and process that accompanies them.

Our current system at PUC is a patchwork of different systems throughout the University with no universal policy or system in place. The system instills a culture that lacks accountability and transparency, along with a feeling of apathy from the student body. Most instructors either never have to show their evaluations to anyone other than themselves, or have the option of picking and choosing the evaluations they submit for performance reviews or in a process to evaluate raises or tenure. The system, by-and-large, has fatal flaws that almost make it worth not doing at all.

This is why the Student Government Association advocates for a system that offers students a fair and legitimate opportunity to evaluate what they were able to learn in a given class, along with how the instructor handled the class. Not only should students be offered an evaluation that allows for this type of critique, but should know that this will see someone else's eyes in addition to *the instructor of the class.*

From my conversations and observations, instructors are fearful of students rating instructors based on the difficulty of the class itself, sometimes putting instructors that teach more rigorous classes at a disadvantage. However, there are evaluation systems that account for this. In fact, one is currently in use at this campus by some instructors, the IDEA system. Implementing this system universally, and ensuring that the unhampered results are seen by people overseeing either the instructor or the subject-matter, is essential in any efforts to reform our course evaluations.

In a day-and-age where higher education is being asked to be more accountable and cost-efficient, our current evaluation system of instructors and courses is laughable. Students, faculty and members of the administration need to come together and develop a system that allows for the improvement of the learning experience for our student body. Currently, we do not have a functioning system that allows for this type of constructive feedback and criticism. The Student Government Association is ready to begin this reform process.

2012 Spring SGA Elections

The month of March will feature the election of new leaders of the Student Government Association for the 2012-2013 academic year. February 29 is the deadline for students to file their application and petition to run for elected office within the SGA. It is not too late to pick up an application and receive the required amount of signatures to enter the 2012 Spring SGA Elections. Applications have been emailed out multiple times via student email, and are available in our SGA office in the Student Union & Library Building Room 324F. Contact us at pucstudent.gov@gmail.com for questions.

Best,

Jessie Martin | Student Body President

Paid for by the Student Government Association

What's Going On?
A look around PUC...

Writing Center presents an interactive research workshop
The Writing Center will present an interactive workshop to help with Finding and Evaluating Academic Research. The workshop will address the use of PULSE (the library's electronic catalog, EbscoHOST-based research databases, and evaluating websites). PUC students, staff, faculty and community members may attend on either Monday, Feb. 27 at 12:30 p.m. or Tuesday, March 6 at 6:00 p.m. in the Writing Center computer lab – CLO 263. Each free session will last approximately 85 minutes. For more information, or to RSVP, call the Writing Center at 219/989-2200. Space is limited, so those interested are encouraged to make reservations early.

Writing Center presents APA documentation style
The Writing Center will present a workshop regarding the APA (American Psychological Association) style of documentation and formatting. The workshop will address how to format an academic paper in this style, which is used in English 10500 and many communication, education, nursing, and management classes. PUC students, staff, faculty and community members may attend on either Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 12:30 p.m. or Wednesday, March 7 at 6:00 p.m. in the Writing Center computer lab – CLO 263. Each free session will last approximately 85 minutes. For more information, or to RSVP, call the Writing Center at 219/989-2200. Space is limited, so those interested are encouraged to make reservations early.

Writing Center presents an interactive self-editing workshop
The Writing Center will present Proofreading, Sentence Structure, and the Kitchen Sink, an interactive workshop to help writers learn to self-edit more effectively. The workshop will address issues of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, homonyms, and techniques for identifying one's writing patterns. PUC students, staff, faculty and community members may attend on either Thursday, March 1 at 12:30 p.m. or Monday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m. in the Writing Center computer lab – CLO 263. Each free session will last approximately 85 minutes. For more information, or to RSVP, call the Writing Center at 219/989-2200. Space is limited, so those interested are encouraged to make reservations early.

Anyone interested in publicizing events, organizations, clubs or departments in "What's Going On?" must submit briefs the Monday before publication. The Chronicle does not guarantee placement of briefs submitted.

Please limit submissions to four sentences and include the first and last name of the contact person.

Briefs may be submitted via e-mail at chronicle@purduecal.edu or campus cc: mail - Chronicle or to the newsroom located in the Student Union and Library building, room 344H.

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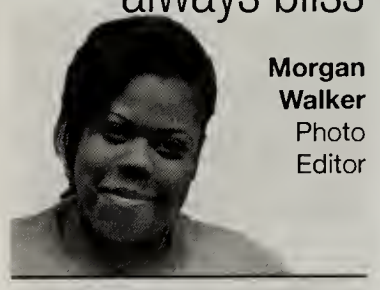
Ignorance isn't always bliss



Morgan Walker
Photo Editor

"Why are people so ignorant?!" This is a question I ask myself every day because it seems like I always spot someone doing something that is obviously ignorant, but yet they still do it and laugh at other people's expenses. I went to the grocery store Food for Less two weeks ago, and the guy who retrieves the carts from the corral was doing his usual duty of rounding up carts when I came out with mine and I packed my groceries into my car.

By the time I finished, the guy had already begun to start a line of carts so he could take them back into the store and instead of putting my cart into the corral I put it with his row of carts. I didn't think it was a big deal; it's just a cart. And besides, that's one less cart he would have to go and get. Then he came up to my car and knocked on my window. He said, "Thank you." I, of course, said, you're welcome back to him but then he said, "No, really, thank you, because people just aren't kind anymore."

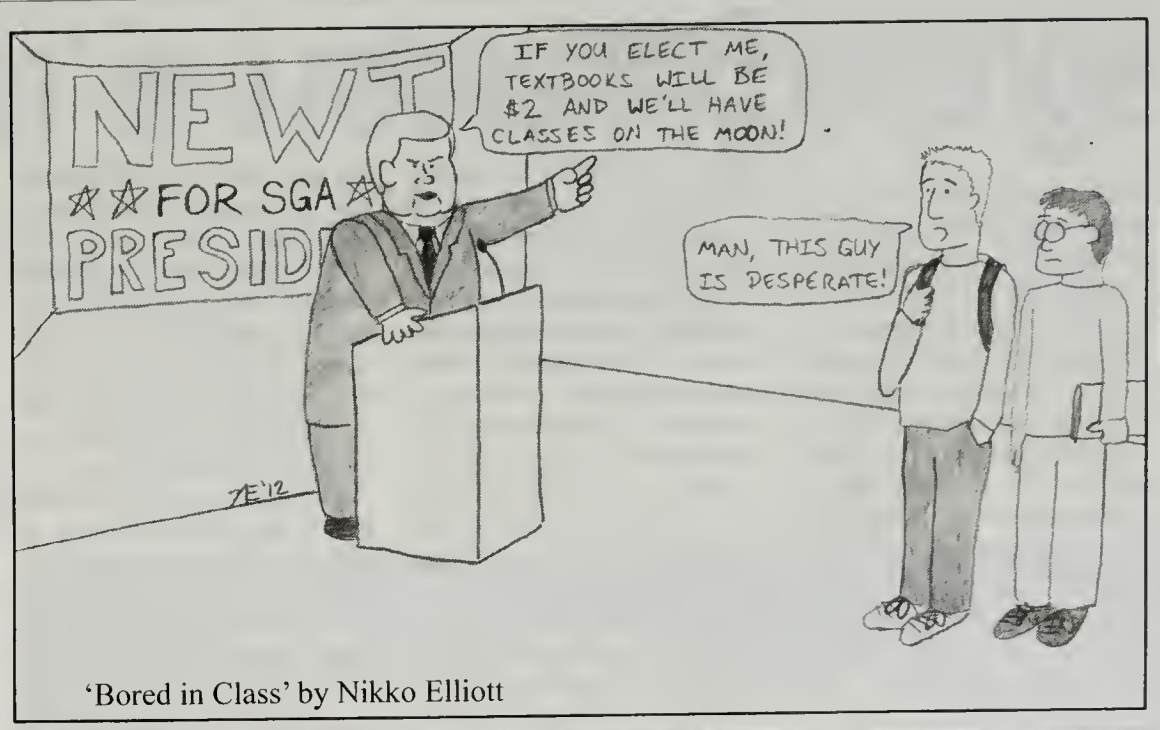
I find it sickening that when I do something nice for someone or when something good happens to people, they're waiting for something bad to happen directly after, or tell me people just don't do things like that anymore. Well, I'm here to tell you that not EVERYONE is ignorant or trying to get over on someone. There are people everywhere that will do some selfless act that they didn't have to do.

"No, really, thank you, because people just aren't kind anymore."

When something really great happens to me, I take it as "someone up there likes me" and move on. Last week, I was tired, hungry and dreading staying in class until 9:50 p.m. I went into the Market @ CLO and bought a pretzel so I could last through class. I got to my class right on time, feeling accomplished and such, then I realized I left my Android tablet just sitting on the counter top. Needless to say, I raced down the hall and stairs like an all-star track runner and got down there and didn't see it at first.

Then I asked the cashier if she saw my tablet, and she said, "Oh, that was yours? Here you go. Someone turned it in for you." Granted, good deeds like these are all too rare in our world today, but when these things happen, you should be happy about it and relish in the moment instead of living each day wondering when the other shoe is going to drop.

Readers can contact Morgan at mawalker@purduecal.edu or (219) 989-2547.



'Bored in Class' by Nikko Elliott

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"It's later than you think"

The issue: PUC offers several options to jumpstart students' careers.
Our stance: Don't wait until you're forced out into the real world to think about your future.

With the economy on the mend and jobs still scarcer than gold in the 1850's, there is no better time to start thinking about post-college life than now. Waiting until after graduation to start hitting the pavement armed with portfolios and resumes puts new graduates at a significant disadvantage, as they leave the relative safety of college life and enter the competitive and cutthroat real world. For every shining accomplishment and sterling GPA that grace an applicant's cover letter, there are dozens of equally qualified competitors lurking around every corner.

Thankfully, PUC has any number of programs and services available to help students prepare for their futures. As mentioned in Andrea Drac's article, "Career Services puts students first" on pg. 1, The Career Services Center on campus offers a wealth of practical assistance in matching students with jobs in their perspective fields.

While just knowing these options are available can be a comforting thought, there really is no reason not to take advantage of them. Even students who are several dozen credit hours shy of a diploma can benefit from an on-campus job, especially one that is related to the focus of their degree.

In addition to the various internships and resume assistance offered, an on-campus job can give students a taste of what is to come while still receiving their education. A job in the library or even Chartwell's may not be the glamorous future we all have planned, but they do provide essential life experience in a time when it is needed most. Another benefit is that you can build a reputation as a hardworking and responsible young adult, a fact that does not go unnoticed. A good reputation goes a long way on campus, and building a rapport with staff and professors can open some pretty surprising doors. And, hey, realistically, we could all use a bit of extra cash.

But work and grades are not the only things that make a resume shine. Extracurricular activities and organizations can also contribute toward making you stand out in a pile of job applications. Institutions such as the Student Government Association and even The Chronicle (now accepting applications) can show potential employers that your time at PUC was spent in the pursuit of more than just a degree.

Despite how certain classes may seem, our time here at PUC is incredibly brief. A little procrastinating as a first-year freshman may be fine, but the last thing any of us want is to wake up the day after graduation and discover we have shortchanged ourselves. Sometimes, the difference between a career and a McJob is one unplaced phone call.

For more information on career services, visit http://webs.purduecal.edu/careerservices/ or read Andrea Drac's article on pg. 1.

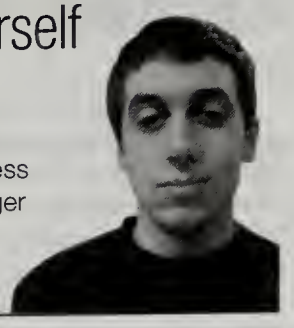
COMMENTS?

Write to us and see your thoughts in print!

The Chronicle Editorial Policy

The views expressed in submitted commentaries and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of The Chronicle or Purdue University Calumet. The Chronicle is not an official publication of Purdue University Calumet. The Chronicle welcomes reader input. Letters and commentaries must include the writers name, class standing or other affiliation and a telephone number for verification. The more concise the letter, the better chance of publication. All materials submitted to The Chronicle become the property of The Chronicle. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit for clarity, accuracy, space and news style. Deadline for submissions is the Friday before the publication.

Challenge yourself



Rey Perez
Business Manager

The rigors of college life are enough to put the smartest, most productive man (or woman) to shame. When the most challenging classes come calling the juniors and seniors, the natural reaction is to pick up and run the opposite way. But hey, I'm here to tell you, the most rewarding and wonderful experiences you may ever have will come from the time you find yourself in these classrooms.

Yes, I'm referring to those monster classes in the communications department. The tales of problems in public relations, and the nightmares and late nights of advertising campaigns are all true, and both could make anyone break into a cold sweat.

In the last two semesters, sleep has become somewhat of a fallacy, eating was overrated and time with friends was really a thing of the past. But, I'll say it again, if you ever find yourself in a position to choose one of these classes as an elective or you just have space on your schedule, take them. You'll find that the reward will far exceed the amount of time spent to create the masterpieces you work on.

"In the last *two semesters*, sleep has become somewhat of a fallacy."

Having already gone through problems in PR, I can confidently say that the greatest payoff of my collegiate career came when I held that audit book for the first time and knew that I had a big hand in creating it. I can now take that 505 page monster to every interview I step into and confidently show my skills instead of just talking about them.

Now, that experience may be surpassed this semester with advertising campaigns taking the front seat in my life. While I'm only five weeks in, I know that the next few months will shape my life forever. Another portfolio piece will be nice, but the real payoff will come from standing on stage and hopefully receiving an award that not many others receive. And hey, a few trips will be nice as well.

The point is, take advantage of the resources you have and completely challenge yourself. The feelings that will run through you will far surpass the stress and anguish you find yourself in literally the entire semester. These courses will shape you both professionally and intellectually, and trust me when I say that when you are done, you will feel like you can take on the world and do any job thrown your way. Just get your sleep, kiss your significant other and hang with your friends a lot before you start.

Readers can contact Rey at chronicle_businessmanager@yahoo.com or (219) 989-2548.

Bestseller

continued from page 1

Mann has been interested in a career as a novelist from a young age. With numerous authors as sources of inspiration, from Jane Austen to David Sedaris, Mann decided to not wait until she graduated before beginning to her fiction-writing career. The beginnings of "Please Swipe Again" 's development was sparked by a moment of inspiration.

"This is going to sound absurd, but I was listening to 'Plane' by Jason Mraz while brushing my teeth one night, and a scene just popped into my head. I ran to my room, found an empty notebook and a pen, and I was off. I wrote what became the first draft of Chapter Four right there," said Mann.

The writing process was sometimes arduous for Mann, yet she was efficiently able to string together the many layers and aspects of the plot.

"My writing process is no way fun for me. Despite wishing so greatly to do so, I have never written linearly. I write in pieces that I've scribbled in my notebook, and it wasn't until I sat down to put it all together that I really knew the story. My notebook was full of random pieces and covered in various sticky notes," said Mann.

After finishing the novel, eventually Mann decided to self-publish her work. By doing so, she was immediately able to have her novel be read world-wide. There are numerous book shipping companies, including Amazon, that sell "Please Swipe Again." Furthermore, Mann is beginning to experience the pressures of a rising fan base.

"I got bombarded with a deluge of "where is the sequel?" comments," said Mann. Mann also found out that a certain celebrity was a fan of her book. "The tweet from a certain sparkly vampire saying he had my book sent from L.A. to his set in Indonesia was pretty awesome."

Naming Janine Harrison and Mark Letcher as inspirational professors, Mann currently is preparing for other potential works.

"In five years, I would definitely like to be where every author wants to be (whether they admit it or not): the New York Times bestseller list," said Mann.

With one novel under her belt, she is definitely on her way.

Career

continued from page 1

Services refers them to their Career Success Guide for sample resumes or gets them set-up in their Online Career Center program.

Wedding said the Online Career Center helps students build resumes and letters, provides skills assessments, virtual mock interviews and allows students to create their own video resume...

"The Online Career Center is a great tool for students to build upon throughout their education," Wedding said.

"We also assist students with applying to jobs by scheduling one-on-one appointments where we can fine-tune their resume, letters, interviewing and job search techniques as well as anything else they might need assistance with in regards to their professional needs."

Wedding always suggests students check CareerTrax regularly since positions for on and off campus employment are posted daily. She also said the beginning of the semester is the busiest times for student worker positions.

"Helping students find jobs has always been important to PUC," Wedding said. "Career Services has gone through numerous name changes throughout the years, but has always been and always will put student success as their number one priority."

For more information about Career Services and about on campus employment, visit http://webs.purduecal.edu/careerservices/.

Examples of student employment:

Orientation Leader
3D Programmer
Homework Helper
Electronics Shop Lab Technician
Procurement & General Services Worker
International Programs Office Mentor
Kindergarten Assistant Teacher
Mail Distribution Assistant
Night Student Operator
Van Driver

Source: Amy Wedding, Career Services Coordinator

Having fun and playing responsibly

Kenny Karrson
Chronicle Correspondent

Those who visit the PUC game room this semester should make it a point to ingrain the Illinois Lottery slogan in their minds. "Have fun, play responsibly."

The game room, located in the SULB, is a place where students can go to socialize with friends and enjoy themselves. It is usually crowded and has a positive atmosphere.

"The game room is a good environment to be around friends," junior Antonio Gordon said. "That's all I can ask for."

Freshman Stephen Bajzatt said he spends almost as much time in the game room as he does in his classes.

However, all is not perfect. Situations have sometimes arisen that involve more than mingling and excitement, as was illustrated last semester.

For a brief period during the fall 2011 semester, the game room was shut down. This was due to some out-of-control students and periodic rowdiness.

In a couple of instances, students were reportedly arrested for intoxication and theft. In another incident, a student was pushed into the adjoining wall of the Student Activities office, disturbing workers next door.

When the game room was reopened, students discovered several changes, including a set of rules posted throughout the room.

"The rules that are in place were always in place before," PUC Intramural Director Matt Dudzik said. "But now, we've posted them in more detail throughout the room, so the users are aware that if they don't follow the rules, they will be asked to leave."

There are also surveillance cameras in the game room, but Dudzik pointed out they have been there for nearly five years.

Although several recent actions have been taken to ensure a more orderly game room, few students are concerned.

Freshman Albert Wortham said he does not "witness much rowdiness," but admitted the presence of security cameras serves as a helpful reminder to students that they need to behave. Bajzatt added that the room should be monitored for safety reasons.

Along with the new security measures, some students would not mind seeing a few other changes within the game room, namely in terms of what games are featured. Freshman Ryan Sharpe said he does not play many games, but frequently plays pool.

In addition to pool, video games are perhaps the most popular with students, while the arcade games are often left vacant. Among the suggestions for new games are an air hockey table, "Mortal Kombat" and "Dance Dance Revolution."

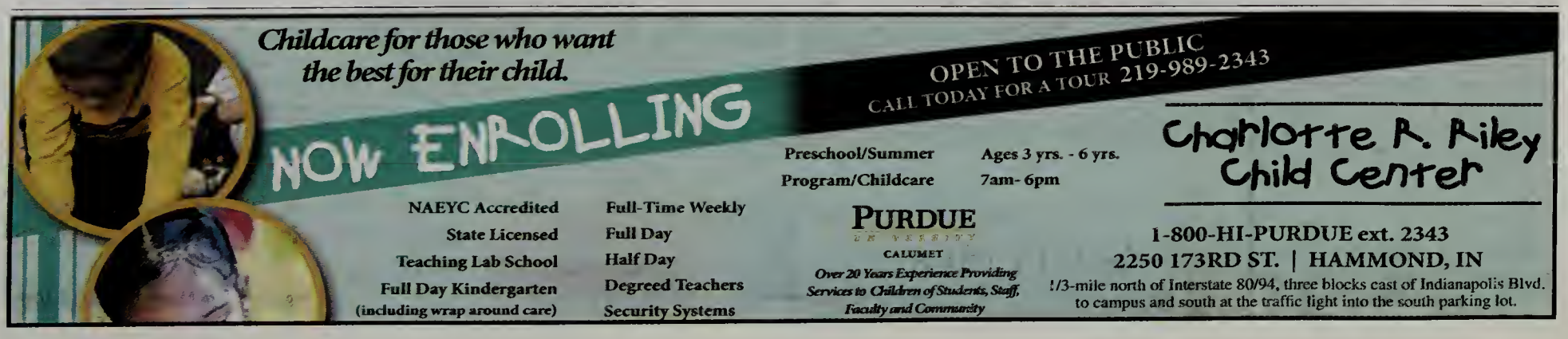
Some students also think they would benefit from a larger room, likely resulting in a diminished number of tightly-packed areas in the room.

Dudzik is pleased with how students have adjusted to the changes and thinks the atmosphere has improved so far this semester.

"Students have been doing a much better job of cleaning up after themselves and watching their language," he said. "It hasn't been perfect, but it is better than previous semesters."

Photo: Morgan Walker

Students take a break from class at the PUC game room.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'Rayman' is a refreshing change of pace

Brian Lynch
Managing Editor

★★★★★

In a holiday season dominated by gritty military shooters and epic roleplaying adventures, the release of a game like "Rayman Origins" was an easy thing to miss. Lacking any of the marketing budget of a triple-A title and hitting shelves a mere four days after the massive release of "Skyrim" certainly did not help matters. Add the fact that the game features no gunplay or online multiplayer features, and it is not hard to see why it is one of the least talked about games of 2011. Despite the lack of hype or dragons, "Rayman Origins" is still one of the best games of the year.

"Rayman Origins" begins in the surrealist paradise known as the Glade of Dreams. Rayman and his buddies are relaxing when their snoring disrupts the residents of the Livid Dead far below. An army of Darktoons invade the Glade, locking up Rayman and imprisoning his friends. In order to rescue them and bring peace back to the Glade, Rayman will have to traverse the game's 60+ levels.

While the story may be contrived and ridiculous, the list of complaints against "Origins" ends there. Everything about the game, from its catchy soundtrack to the gorgeous graphics and controls is sheer platforming perfection.

"Origins" is the first game to utilize publisher Ubisoft's new "UbiArt framework," a revolutionary game engine that allows developers to easily render content from simple models. This lets developers focus on the art of a game without getting bogged down in the technical aspect of game design. Clearly this approach to designing a game works, because the visuals in "Rayman Origins" are absolutely stunning. While many games opt for a cartoony art style, with its crisp colors and smooth animations "Origins" is the first game that actually feels like playing a cartoon. Each progressive world has its own distinct style and manages to feel fresh despite playing on platformer conventions like water- and ice-themed levels.

The gameplay will feel familiar to anyone who has played a platformer like "Super Mario Bros." before. Rayman runs through each level avoiding or defeating enemies in order to reach a cage filled with captured Electoons at the stage's end. At first, Rayman can only defeat enemies by jumping on them, but rescuing

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gameinformer.com

Even swimming is a blast in "Rayman Origins."

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The Darkness II shrouds an emotional ride

g33kwatch.com

Jackie Estacado takes up his role as the bringer of death in "The Darkness II."

Dune Lorenz
Editor-in-Chief

★★★

Underneath all the massive amounts of gore and violence that fill "The Darkness II" lies a story that tugs on the heartstrings a lot harder than expected. As strange as it is to call a game that allows players to have tentacles tear through enemies like "Alien" chestbursters romantic or emotional, "The Darkness II" somehow manages to couple death and romance into a believable package that plays mediocre but feels all too real.

This game takes place two years after the first, in which main character Jackie Estacado became the wielder of the Darkness while trying to survive a mob hit put out on him by Paulie Franchetti. Franchetti kidnaps Jackie's childhood sweetheart and girlfriend Jenny Romano in retaliation to his demon-like powers of the Darkness, subsequently slaughtering her in front of Jackie as he struggles to control the Darkness in a failed attempt to save her.

Jackie has since killed everyone responsible for Jenny's death, taking over as the Don of the Franchetti mob in the process. Tucking away his Darkness powers after seeing the horrific result of being unable to control them, Jackie is still haunted by the memories of his girlfriend on a daily basis.

Inevitably though, there is a fight, and Jackie's friends and family are put at risk by an unknown assailant. Jackie unleashes his Darkness powers yet again, which quickly envelope his actions, thirsting for blood and retribution.

"First time you use the Darkness, it scares you, but once you've tasted it, you can't stop. It's all you think about. Like I said, it consumes you."

Immediately from the get-go, the sheer amount of violence associated with controlling a demonic presence is completely out of control. At the flick of a button, as long as they are in the dark, players can whip, impale and tear apart any enemies that stand in their way. Car doors are thrown like ninja stars, construction poles like javelins and bodies like ragdolls, with severed body parts flooding the walkways even more than the victims' blood.

Players can pick up a variety of guns and dual-wield them with the left and right triggers on their controllers, while using their Darkness tentacles with the left and right bumpers respectively. The freedom to whip an enemy into a brick wall and dangle their flailing body in front of a player's face before literally eating their heart or ripping them apart like a wishbone absolutely captures the feeling of power that Jackie possesses.

Dark essence is gained from killing enemies, which players can use to unlock powers to make Jackie even stronger, giving him the ability to do everything from summoning swarms of distracting insects to turning enemies' hearts into black hole projectiles that devour anything in their paths.

Despite all of these amazing abilities, "The Darkness II" still feels like a generic shooter with some gimmicks that try and help players forgive its flaws. In the long run, this is not enough, as the executions performed on enemies, such as ripping them in two, quickly repeat themselves, becoming far less impactful upon each repeated visit.

Ultimately, the major redeeming factors of the game lie within the story and the multiplay-

See Darkness page 7

Rating System

★★★★★ ESSENTIAL
★★★★ EXCELLENT
★★★ AVERAGE
★★ POOR
★ AWFUL

Rayman

continued from page 5

captured magic fairies unlocks new abilities. These abilities, such as gliding through the air and running up walls, help players not only advance in the game, but also reach previously inaccessible areas in earlier levels. By the game's end, players will have quite a few new tricks to use against enemies. Fortunately, the controls are tight and responsive, making every wall jump and flying punch a breeze to execute.

"Rayman Origins" can be played solo, but it really shines in something gamers have nearly forgotten: local cooperative play. Up to four players can grab a controller and join in on the fun. "New Super Mario Bros." for the Wii featured similar gameplay, though it seems to work better in "Origins." The characters do not collide when coming into contact with one another, leading to less frustrating accidents and potential arguments. Players can still smack one another around, however, which can result in some humorous moments. The game also apes another element from "NSMB" in that when one player dies, he transforms into a bubble, allowing his partner to revive him by bursting the bubble. Seeing as players die after being hit by one enemy attack (two if they have collected one of the hearts scattered throughout a level), having a friend nearby can come in handy.

Whether played solo or with friends, "Rayman Origins" offers a surprisingly welcome challenge. Early levels are rather easy to traverse, while the later stages of the game become rather difficult. Though the game never reaches "Super Meat Boy" difficulty, it definitely amps up the pressure. In addition to the regular levels, the game features time trials and unlockable challenges that are controller-throwing exercises in frustration.

It truly is a shame "Rayman Origins" did not set the gaming world on fire with its release, but that does not change the fact that it is a solid, polished game. At $20 for a new copy, there really is no excuse to pass up on this charming and refreshing game. In an industry populated with monochromatic shoot-em-ups and bland sequels, "Rayman Origins" brings some much needed color to the landscape.

"Rayman Origins" is available for the PC, Xbox 360, PS3, Nintendo Wii, Nintendo 3DS and PS Vita.

Cage goes up in flames

Michelle Mullins
Asst. Entertainment Editor

★

Since the previous "Ghost Rider" was a complete flop with critics, producers scrambled to concoct a new take on the dark rider's story, but ultimately failed. Fans were promised a darker side of the hero in "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance," and a writer from the newest Batman films (David S. Goyer) was even pulled into the team. The directing team that brought the "Crank" movies was put in the hot seat and given the chains to control this beast, but alas, the beast went out of control and got lost in a blaze of 3-D fire and smoke for 95 minutes.

Nicholas Cage ("National Treasure") reprises his role as Johnny Blaze, who is still dealing with the curse of turning into Ghost Rider when the wicked are near, but now he has traveled to Eastern Europe in an attempt to escape his past. There, Blaze meets Moreau, played by Idris Elba ("Thor," "The Wire"), who tells him that if he helps save a young boy, his curse can be lifted. Blaze obviously takes the deal, but soon realizes that he is simply adding more fuel to the flame.

Acting is the biggest issue with this movie, particularly with Cage's sub-par performance. Cage is surrounded by decent to above average actors, such as the main antagonist Roarke, played by Ciaran Hinds ("There Will Be Blood"), who is the human form of the devil. He has some of the least cringe-worthy lines of the movie, and he delivers despite how two-dimensional his character is. Cage, however, still manages to have no idea what he is doing. One scene he is screaming and singing at a man about how the Ghost Rider is "scratching at the door," and the next he is talking about his father and trying to create a serious and touching moment. Both attempts fail to hit home and instead leave the audience confused and disappointed. He is known for his over-the-top and crazed behavior, but in this case it just comes off as unwarranted and irritating.

The story is all over the place, and major pacing issues cause the movie to feel twice as long. No actual storyline is developed until about 30 minutes in, after Ghost Rider has already made his first appearance. Background story is provided in an animated storybook way, but besides that, no plot is presented. After the plot begins to emerge, the movie spirals into a formulaic mess of big action scenes followed by long poorly-acted scenes of exposition.

The action scenes are dull, even with Ghost Rider's new "spit fire" move. It seems as though no one knows how to put fire out in this film. Consequently, no one knows what sand or water is, so Ghost Rider is practically invincible. It is hard to rally for the hero when his opponents provide no sense of danger to him.

One of the stronger points of the movie is the improved computer effects, despite a budget of $65 million (compared to the first film's $110). The fire engulfing the Rider's head no longer resembles graphics from a cheap video game. The fire that spewed from his skull and bike actually look real this time. His design appears grittier than in the previous incarnation, with a black skull instead of a white one and ash coming off of his clothes instead of magically never catching fire like in the original movie.

However, no level of character design can save this burning ship. The tiny hint of talent sprinkled around Cage does him no good. It is as if he took the script and read it over before each shot, and that shot made it into the movie. "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance" is simply messy and uninteresting. Hopefully Ghost Rider's chains do not actually reach beyond the screen, so others are not dragged into this woeful nightmare.

anomalousmaterial.com

Johnny Blaze (Nicholas Cage) travels to Eastern Europe attempting to escape his past in "Ghost Rider: Spirit of Vengeance."

Darkness

continued from page 7

er. The moments Jackie spends remembering tender memories with Jenny in the single-player campaign bring terrifying realism to the emotions the game tries to evoke amongst players.

Haunting memories of old hangouts flood the single-player experience, providing both heartwarming and heartbreaking experiences with every step taken through the day and night comparisons. Jackie will remember dancing with his girlfriend in a diner near closing time, only for it to turn into an abandoned rust bucket once he comes to, essentially ripping him away from Jenny all over again with every interrupted daydream.

With Jenny often staring into Jackie's eyes accompanying simplistic yet meaningful button-prompts such as "Press 'X' to let go" during cuddlefests, it is incredibly difficult not to be emotionally touched by Jackie's overbearing sense of guilt, loss and love.

Just the same, the multiplayer aspect of the game provides bite-sized portions of cooperative violence against enemies that feel like feverish sugar rushes of brutality. Each player rushes to get as many violent kills as possible, "unleashing their inner demon" in the process.

While "The Darkness II" does not capture the essence of addictive gameplay, the relatable romance story that was so notable in the first game has only progressed further in this sequel, accomplishing more than most recent romantic movies have and encompassing consumers more than they would ever hope to dream.

"The Darkness II" is available for the PC, Xbox 360 and PS3.

W Bball

continued from page 8

trolled." It worked, as PUC pulled out to a 92-67 final.

The game featured strong performances from Brooklyn Short (18 points) and Amanda Gaskin (11 points, 11 rebounds). The big star, though, was Stephaine Beck. The departing senior scored 28 in her final home game, setting a school record for three pointers (going 6-9) in the process.

"I'm definitely happy with my performance," Beck said. "And the team's. It's a great way to go out."

Beck's six were a part of 10 total threes for the women on this night. This performance was strong, but, according to Megyesi, unintentional.

"We take our shots the [opposing] defense gives us," he said.

The win Feb. 23 earned PUC a spot in the CCAC Championship game on Feb. 25. Their opponent was Cardinal Stritch, forcing them to make the trip to Milwaukee for the final.

"We held teams to respectable points," Beck said. "We definitely have confidence, whoever it is [that we play]."

The final was a close contest, with PUC up 27-25 at the half. But Cardinal Stritch pulled away, and won 71-63.

Despite coming up short, the team was proud of at least making the final game a fight.

"We were so close and we never gave up," guard Alex Starr said. "I'm so proud of my team tonight and this whole season."

PUC will find out this week if the women's efforts were enough to make an appearance in the NAIA tournament.

Photo: Luiu Zhao

Madison Gervais drives down the court during the PUC women's game against Trinity Christian on Feb. 21.

Spring 2012

Intramural sports standings

Soccer - Week #3

East	W	L	T
Kalloon	3	0	0
Saihat	3	0	0
Barcelona	2	0	1
Pirlo 21	1	1	1
FC Barca	1	2	0
Inter FC	1	2	0
Falcons	0	3	0
FSU	0	3	0

West	W	L	T
Excalibur	3	0	0
African Connection	2	1	0
Manchester Calumet	2	1	0
Arsenal FC	2	1	0
PUC Firs	1	2	0
Uppsom Children	1	2	0
The B Team	1	2	0
Cleats &..	0	3	0

Bowling - Week #3

Tuesday	W	L
Stooges	3	1
Excuses	3	1
Rolling Thunder	2	2
Elites	2	2
3 Bowlers & Woodie	2	2
Minds in the Gutter	2	2
Just for Fun	2	2
Lane Violations	2	2
Diamonds	2	2
Gutter Off Dead	0	4

Wednesday	W	L
Whitey Knights	4	2
PUC Spares	4	2
Snakes on a Lane	3	3
Cutie Pies	3	3
Split Happens	3	3
Falcons	3	3
The 4 Amigos	3	3
The Turkeys	3	3
Strike Out	2	4
Fantastic Four	2	4

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Men's basketball season ends at semis

Julie Sipek
Sports Writer

The men's basketball team upset number three seed Judson University in Elgin, Ill. on Feb. 21, which sent them into the conference semi-finals. However, their season came to an end Feb. 23 when they lost to the Crimson Wave of Calumet College of St. Joseph.

PUC went into the playoffs this year with only an 8-20 record, but things were starting to look up as the season came to an end.

"I honestly felt as if the team was coming more together," said junior Andrew Anderson of the final games of the season.

PUC won three of their last five games and, as evidenced by the game on Feb. 21, looked as if they had learned to overcome the second-half woes that had plagued the team for the majority of the season. The men were down by eight points with just two and a half minutes left against the Eagles.

Months earlier in the season this may have been a death sentence for PUC. On this night, though, the team turned it on when it counted and went on a 15-2 run to take the game 76-71.

"We were very confident," freshman Leroy Cooper said. "We had a great practice the day before the game."

The team's "determination and teamwork," along with senior Alex Richman's 25 points and junior Trent Tucker's 11 rebounds ,were hard to overcome.

Two days later, PUC took a ride down Indianapolis Blvd. to CCSJ to battle for a spot in the conference championship. Unfortunately for the visiting team, this playoff match-up would end in the same fashion as every other meeting of the cross-town rivals this season, with the Crimson Wave the victor.

"We were outplayed and the better team won," Anderson said.

The PUC offense had seen better days, as they only shot 31.4 from the field and made two of 21 three-point shots. Richman led the team with 18 points in his final collegiate game, followed by Anderson with 11 on the way to the 90-55 loss.

The men finished the 2011-2012 season with a 9-21 record and feel as though this season was a good learning experience for the program.

"There were some ups and downs, but overall we learned a lot throughout the season," Anderson said.

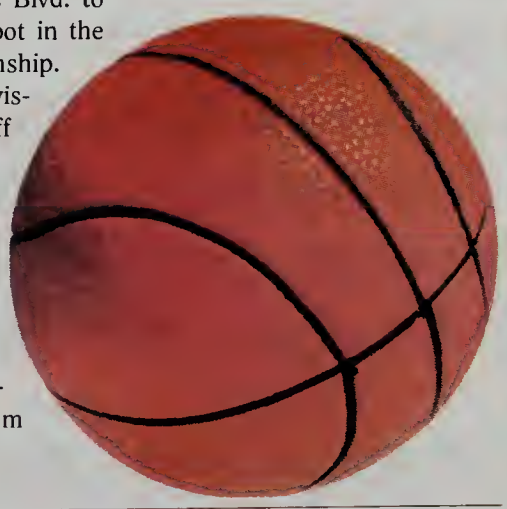
The experiences on the court in competition were not the only ones that made a difference for the players this season. One tradition that the team holds is the running of the high school basketball showcase where the coaches and players get to run drills for high school players considering a collegiate athletic career.

"I'm a huge fan of basketball," Cooper said. "I enjoyed coaching and watching the high school players showcase their talent."

Another memorable encounter this season was when the players took a trip up to Michigan to watch a Division I game and get some court time in a large arena.

"We practiced on their court," Anderson said. "It was good to see a team at their level and how much they prepared and how hard they worked."

The team goes into the offseason looking to fine-tune and maintain the skills they have developed and await the coming of next season.



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Women finish as CCAC runners-up

Photo: Lulu Zhao

Brooklyn Short jumps for a rebound.

Bill Koester
Sports Editor

The PUC women's basketball team made a strong showing in the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference.

The team finished the season with a record of 21-9, with a 10-2 record in conference play. This was enough for home court advantage in their first two games in the tournament.

The opening game, Feb. 21 against Trinity Christian, was the type of one-sided contest common to the first round. PUC never fell behind, and controlled the game in every respect. The final score was 86-60 in PUC's favor.

As the game went on, and the lead grew, the starters were pulled and the bench got some substantial playing time.

"When we can, we play everybody," head coach Tom Megyesi said. "I'm very pleased [the bench] got the opportunity to play."

PUC's opening win awarded them a second home game in the semifinals on Feb. 23. Their opponent was Trinity International, and the game was another blowout, though at times closer than the final score suggested.

Up 17 at halftime, PUC allowed their opponents to chip away in the opening minutes of the second half, getting the game down to a 10-point lead. However, Megyesi was prepared, and his team adjusted.

"We slowed the ball down at the eight-minute mark," Megyesi said. "We played more con-

See W Bball page 7

Photo: Lulu Zhao

Stephaine Beck dribbles the ball against Trinity Christian on Feb. 21.